

Santa Barbara Police Department

Policy Manual

Updated Sample Draft Sections 2018

USE OF FORCE CORE PRINCIPLES

The Santa Barbara Police Department's highest priority is safeguarding the sanctity of life, dignity and liberty of all persons. Officers shall demonstrate this principle in their daily interactions with the community they are sworn to protect and serve. The Department is committed to accomplishing this mission with respect and minimal reliance on the use of force by using rapport-building communication, crisis intervention, and de-escalation tactics before resorting to force, whenever feasible.¹ Vesting officers with the authority to use reasonable force and to protect the public welfare requires monitoring, evaluation and a careful balancing of all interests.²

USE OF FORCE³

Officers shall use only that amount of force that reasonably appears necessary given the facts and circumstances perceived by the officer at the time of the event to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement purpose. The reasonableness of force will be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene at the time of the incident. Any evaluation of reasonableness must allow for the fact that officers are often forced to make split-second decisions about the amount of force that reasonably appears necessary in a particular situation, with limited information and in circumstances that are tense, uncertain and rapidly evolving. Given that no policy can realistically predict every possible situation an officer might encounter, officers are entrusted to use well-reasoned discretion in determining the appropriate use of force in each incident. It is also recognized that circumstances may arise in which officers reasonably believe that it would be impractical or ineffective to use any of the tools, weapons or methods provided by the Department. Officers may find it more effective or reasonable to improvise their response to rapidly unfolding conditions that they are confronting. In such circumstances, the use of any improvised device or method must nonetheless be reasonable and utilized only to the degree that reasonably appears necessary to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement purpose. While the ultimate objective of every law enforcement encounter is to avoid or minimize injury, nothing in this policy requires an officer to retreat or be exposed to possible physical injury before applying reasonable force.

DE-ESCALATION⁴ (Definition)

Taking action or communicating verbally or non-verbally during a potential force encounter in an attempt to stabilize the situation and reduce the immediacy of the threat so that more time, options, and resources can be called upon to resolve the situation without the use of force or with a reduction in the force necessary. De-escalation may include the use of such techniques as command presence, advisements, warnings, verbal persuasion, and tactical repositioning.

¹Source SFPD

² Source Lexipol

³ Source Lexipol

⁴ Source National Consensus Policy

DE-ESCALATION⁵ (Policy)

An officer shall use de-escalation techniques and other alternatives to higher levels of force consistent with his or her training whenever possible and appropriate before resorting to force and to reduce the need for force. Whenever possible and when such delay will not compromise the safety of the officer or another and will not result in the destruction of evidence, escape of a suspect, or commission of a crime, an officer shall allow an individual time and opportunity to submit to verbal commands before force is used.

DEADLY FORCE (Definition)⁶ - Force reasonably anticipated and intended to create a substantial likelihood of causing death or very serious injury.

SHOOTING AT OR FROM MOVING VEHICLES⁷

Shots fired at or from a moving vehicle are rarely effective. Officers should move out of the path of an approaching vehicle instead of discharging their firearm at the vehicle or any of its occupants. An officer should only discharge a firearm at a moving vehicle or its occupants when the officer reasonably believes there are no other reasonable means available to avert the threat of the vehicle, or if deadly force other than the vehicle is directed at the officer or others. Officers should not shoot at any part of a vehicle in an attempt to disable the vehicle.

USE OF FORCE ANALYSIS⁸

At least annually, the Professional Standards Sergeant should prepare an analysis report on use of force incidents. The report should be submitted to the Chief of Police. The report should not contain the names of officers, suspects or case numbers, and should include:

- (a) The identification of any trends in the use of force by members.
- (b) Training needs recommendations.
- (c) Equipment needs recommendations.
- (d) Policy revision recommendations.

REPORTING THE USE OF FORCE⁹

Any use of force by a member of this department shall be documented promptly, completely and accurately in an appropriate report, depending on the nature of the incident. The officer should articulate the factors perceived and why he/she believed the use of force was reasonable under the circumstances. To collect data for purposes of training, resource allocation, analysis and related purposes, the Department may require the completion of additional report forms, as specified in department policy, procedure or law.

300.2.1 DUTY TO INTERCEDE¹⁰

Any officer present and observing another officer using force that is clearly beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances shall, when in a position to do so, intercede to prevent

⁵ Source National Consensus Policy

⁶ Source Lexipol

⁷ Source Lexipol

⁸ Source Lexipol

⁹ Source Lexipol

¹⁰ Source Lexipol

the use of unreasonable force. An officer who observes another employee use force that exceeds the degree of force permitted by law should promptly report these observations to a supervisor.

SOURCES:

http://www.theiacp.org/Portals/0/documents/pdfs/National_Consensus_Policy_On_Use_Of_Force.pdf

<http://sanfranciscopolice.org/sites/default/files/Documents/PoliceDocuments/DepartmentGeneralOrders/DGO%205.01%20Use%20of%20Force%20%28Rev.%2012-21-16%29.pdf>

<http://www.lexipol.com/>